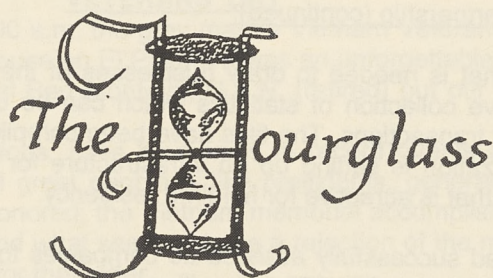


# Historical Society of Palm Desert

P.O. Box 77

Palm Desert, CA 92261

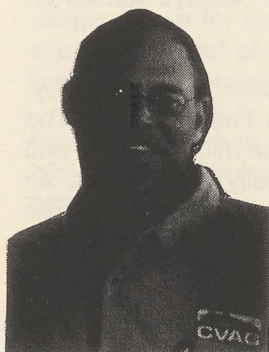
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WINTER 2005

VOL. 12, NO. 4



## **ANNUAL FALL LUNCHEON** Featured Speaker: John Wohlmuth, C.V.A.G.

Thanks to everyone in charge of arrangements, this event came off without a hitch; the food was great, and enjoying it in the historical ambiance of Shadow Mountain Club made it even better. President Hal Rover made announcements on the Society's new public address system. Mario Hernandez of TileCare was introduced as the owner of the historic "Hopalong Cassidy" house on Joshua Tree. He would host an open house for the public on Nov. 12. Paula Ables made a presentation to the Society from the Washington School PTA as thanks for the assistance we gave in the school's demolition celebration.

**John M. Wohlmuth**, Executive Director of CVAG, did an exceptionally good job in his talk "Growth in the Coachella Valley & Transportation." He ably handled many questions after his speech. Everyone left talking about how they enjoyed the talk; but also disgruntled to hear that there would be an estimated 1.2 million residents in the valley by the year 2030. Just as the pioneers in the 1950s and 60s wouldn't recognize the Palm Desert of today, we might have difficulty picturing what it will be like in 25 years. Is growth good or bad? There are two sides to every story.... so check out the following article to get the C.V.E.P. view.

## **MAKING HISTORY** **Coachella Valley Economic Partnership** Edited by Curator Ginny Folkers from Society archives

This regional organization was founded in 1994 for the purpose of attracting businesses to the Coachella Valley and thereby generating jobs. At the time, it had 50 members, both public sector agencies and private sector companies. The annual dues were \$1,000 for a seat on the board of directors, and \$5,000 for a seat on the executive committee. The budget for this Palm Desert based, private, non-profit organization was approximately \$100,000 with a goal of reaching an annual operating budget of \$200,000.

In the summer of 1997 the Partnership, along with GTE's "Region of Choice" economic development program released a video entitled "Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley: Your Future is Waiting." It was an 8-minute production costing \$100,000, and designed to be used by the nine cities in the valley as well as by Riverside County. Spot-lighted in the video were transportation, education, location and lifestyle (including housing, medical care, and recreational activities.) The film would be used to create interest in and a positive feeling about the Coachella Valley; in addition to the video, brochures and written materials would come into play.

Mid-2000 saw the emphasis put technology in an effort to foster growth in the region's high-tech sector. The Coachella Valley Tech-Board 2000 was set up to counsel top officials in areas of development, finance, accounting, law and higher education. To start with, the advisory board hoped to attract five businesses as clients, with requirements of 12-months in business and showing and income from company operations.

In October 2000 the emphasis was on golf, and making the desert the best golf distribution hub on the West Coast. Realizing that golf is one of the desert's biggest assets, and the cornerstone of the area's economic future, it was essential that this sport be a top priority. The track record of CVEP in the prior two years was good, because they attracted four manufacturing & assembly companies, three nutritional supplement companies, two vehicle and auto companies, a technology company, and eleven other new and expanding businesses.



Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (continued):

Statistics are a big part of what is needed to draw businesses of the caliber we want to establish in the valley. CVEP maintains an impressive collection of statistics which can be used to inform potential companies, and to assist them in facilitating their transactions. The files have been compiled through years of research, basically with three employees. The organization is setting up an infrastructure for growth, changing the valley's identity from tourism exclusively to a place that is attractive for full-time residency.

By summer of 2003 CVEP had successfully assisted 26 companies to get established in the valley. Its economic impact since its founding in 1994 was \$77,075,000, with expenditures of \$1,636,337. A diverse economic base is needed to increase the valley's tax base and improve employment percentages. One area of possibility which seems to be visible in the background is the alternate fuel field, especially with College of the Desert's studies on the subject.

CVEP has been looking for some time, along with Imperial Valley, at a possible alliance with Mexicali Valley. Having attracted manufacturing plants, ten trade schools, and eight universities, Mexicali is a bustling place. The "sleepy little Mexican town" is no more, because the capital of Baja has a population of over one million people and currently employs 100,000 workers. Going on the premise that bigger is better, especially if it carries an international tag, CVEP is investigating the advantages of this kind of relationship. Cross-border trade in both directions can become less of a burden with time and experience. The reduced tariff payments spelled out by the North American Free Trade Agreement can be beneficial for businesses on both sides of the border. Two new projects on the horizon are the Silicon Border Development, a 10,000-acre science park in Mexicali, and also a proposed high-speed magnetic train system to connect San Diego to Imperial County for transporting passengers as well as freight.

In September 2004 Rick Daniels, a La Quinta business owner and a founding member of CVEP, stepped in as the president of the organization. He has been in the valley 15 years, and knows what kind of growth we need in order to form a solid, sustainable economy. Jobs need to be provided for the 42 new people who move into the valley every day. He sees the task as one to assist businesses seeking to expand or relocate. Economic growth doesn't "just happen", it needs to be aggressively recruited. Growth seen as "good" for our area mostly covers the following areas: education, recreation, alternative fuels, aging, multimedia.....and that's where CVEP is focusing their attention. Daniels says they will never give up on trying to attract large corporations, but that is not their main goal. Being familiar with problems created when a community becomes too popular, Daniels says he wants to attract business in a way that contributes to "smart growth."

The partnership has embarked on developing a program which will set more advantageous career paths for low-income young people. With financial assistance from grants, potential employees can be trained to take jobs in environmental (consider Salton Sea clean-up) and energy technologies, health care/aging, and new media: film and television production, entertainment and digital technologies. Other undertakings will be an industrial property survey and recruiting corporate offices. The college campuses located in Palm Desert and the east valley campus of C.O.D. would be involved in this training process, and higher-paying jobs would be the ultimate goal. Education is most often the key to a higher standard of living, a worthy goal for mankind in our present day and age.

**MOVIE MUSEUM**  
**A Docent Field Trip**

Did you know that we have a movie museum right here in Palm Desert? It is owned by Richard Nederhauser, who has a fantastic collection of movie memorabilia from the late 1800s and early 1900s. As you pass the garage and enter the back yard of his home, you come upon the building Richard constructed himself. As you enter, a gorgeous dummy in period dress smiles a greeting, and the enticing smell of popcorn fills the air. Immediately behind our silent hostess is an impressive 1927 projection machine, kept in tip-top condition for showing the old reel-style films; "talkies" began in 1928 so a sound head has been added.

After serving in the Navy during W.W. II, Richard was bitten by the movie bug. He started out as a projectionist, and was later hired as an overseer in the renovation of old theaters. This was the source of many of his relics, which include seats from various theaters where he worked. Two beautiful stained-glass windows overlook a monumental amount of antiques, posters, reels in canisters, lanterns, 52 copper and brass fire extinguishers, and an impressive library of books about the actors and actresses of yester-year. Mr. Nederhauser is a gracious host who conducts a very interesting tour. Society members who attended thoroughly enjoyed the experience.



### VETERANS' DAY

In the 11th month, on the 11th day, at 11:00 a.m. the grey marble Vietnam Veterans Memorial was rededicated at its new location in front of the historic fire house on El Paseo. It was an unforgettable ceremony which brought tears to the eyes of those who attended. Admiral Ben Montoya, U.S.N. (retired) put our thoughts and feelings in a nut shell as he addressed the crowd:

"The United States, like other nations, uses memorials to record events and people in history. Most of these monuments depict great events and great people -- like presidents, generals, World War II, etc. It is rare when a nation's everyday life heroes are honored; the Vietnam memorial accomplishes that goal. Those of us who lived through it recall the national turmoil and what seemed to be a rejection of the men and women who answered a call to duty. Over time, this has changed for the better.

Memorials, though honoring the dead, are important for the living -- both those who served and those who will serve. It is a nation's way of saying 'Thank you', which is so simple but so very important. Brave young men and women serve for many reasons, but all know their prime purpose is to defend the homeland and its way of life -- even at the cost of their lives. The recognition of their good deeds and preservation of their contribution in a long line of many is important to them and to those who follow.

The U.S.A. is founded on the dignity and worth of each citizen. Our citizens voluntarily bear arms to defend those values when challenged. As a nation we must continue to emulate the admonitions of the Army Rangers 'No Man Left Behind' and the Marines' 'Semper Fidelis = Always Faithful.' Your community ceremony this morning passes that test ..... we thank you."



Carlos Ortega, Ben Montoya, Dick Kelly, Buford Crites, Dick Folkers

The program committee members deserve our thanks; they are: Councilman Dick Kelly, Pres. Hal Rover, Vice-Pres. Dick Folkers, Office Manager Anne Tuttle, and the City's Special Events Coordinator Pat Scully. Others who participated were City Manager Carlos Ortega, Fr. Robert Certain and Mayor Buford Crites. A lady with a bugle lent an unmatched atmosphere .....Candy Murphy played the national anthem at the beginning and taps at the end.

### 13th ANNUAL MINI-MUSTER

**Chairpersons: John & Madonna Marman**

Society members, firemen, and school district staff were busy the first two weeks of October. The Society's outreach program puts third graders in four local schools through fire safety training. Besides the actual two weeks, the Marmans do mountains of paperwork for coordination, prep time and follow-up. The firemen do most of the setting up in the field, put the kids through their paces, and even mop floors to get ready for the following assembly. There are so many adults involved in this program..... but for their loyalty it would never happen. We appreciate all your efforts and extend to you our biggest and best "THANK YOU !!!!"

### HOPALONG CASSIDY HOUSE

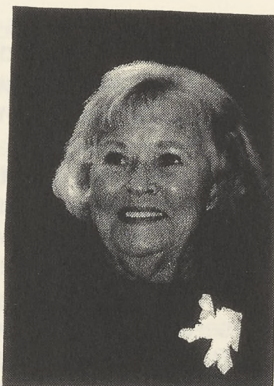
**Open House - Saturday, Nov. 12, 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

Did you know that the black and white house located at 73-498 Joshua Tree was built by Bill Boyd, alias "Hopalong Cassidy" in the early 1950s? It was recently purchased by Mario Hernandez, who is the owner of TileCare. He restored the home, with beautiful tile floors and desert landscaping in the front yard. During the Saturday open house almost 600 people toured the house and enjoyed refreshments and door prizes courtesy of Mario.

Many Society members helped out by hosting each room, getting sign-ins, distributing biographies of "Hoppy", and visiting with the sight-seers. There was a huge walk-in closet (in the days before this feature was common), saddles around the bar on the patio, pool, guest room. The garage was set up as a theater, and the Society brought in posters from the exhibit at the fire house. Apparently Hoppy liked black and white, his cowboy outfit was always black (maybe the only good guy in a black hat), and even his Cadillac and his horse "Topper" were white.

Were you in the desert when Hoppy lived here? If you have any of the wooden nickels he used to distribute to the children and would like to donate them to the Society, we would be grateful to have them for exhibit.





### **HARRIETT S. OBERHAUS**

#### **A Member Biography**

This is a lady who likes to keep busy, a trait she has been practicing her whole life. She was born in Los Angeles in 1924 to I.N. and Alma Smith, who were transplants from Kansas. College years were spent at U.C.L.A. and U.C. where she earned B.S. and L.S. degrees. She and her husband of 45 years had four children (2 boys & 2 girls) and her grandchildren fit the same description.

Harriett lists her interests as storytelling, reading and travel. She has hung her hat in so many places, it sounds like a travelogue: Tarzana, San Francisco, Saratoga, Palm Desert, Lake Havasu, Oahu, and now Indian Wells. Currently, she is a member of C.O.D. Friends of the Library and the Historical Society of Palm Desert.

After raising their children, Harriett and "Obe" moved to Palm Desert in 1969. He was a business manager and worked with Harvest Health Foods. Her work here consisted of development of the Children's Program for Palm Desert Library which included weekly storytelling. Also, for a year she had a storytelling program on television - Channel 10. The library sponsored a golf cart in the first Golf Cart Parade based on the book "Charlotte's Web"; they borrowed Cliff Henderson's golf cart and Jean Ernst was the designated driver. Simultaneously, the Oberhaus' opened the first gym in the area. "Halona Gym" opened in 1970 and was very successful...this was before exercising was "the thing to do." When they moved in 1979, they sold the business to Mary Zangani, a local resident.

From 1979 to 1989 they lived in Lake Havasu City, where Harriett didn't let any grass grow under her feet. She was the Head Librarian, developed Children's Summer Reading Programs, again did weekly storytelling, and wrote a state grant for a new children's room. The addition was dedicated as the "Harriett S. Oberhaus Children's Room." Harriett was active in the Women's Club, and was honored with the Woman of the Year award.

When her husband retired in 1989 they moved to Oahu where Harriett was a docent at the Bishop Hawaiian Museum. Later, she was a living history guide at the Mission Houses Museum. Here she organized and started a program for new docents. Storytelling was still in her blood, and she was active in the "Reading is Fundamental" program for school children. On becoming a widow, Harriett moved back to the desert in 1998 to be near her family. We are so fortunate to have her as a docent at the Society, and she has agreed to give us the benefit of her experience by assisting with the volunteer program and training docents.

### **ARCHIE SHARP**

#### **A Biography**

Mr. Sharp is working for the Society in the design and execution of exhibits. Two years ago he created a display for our feature exhibit: Firefighting - Tools of the Trade. His challenge was to fit 35 toy fire trucks into a 4-foot square space. Using slanted runways, Archie accomplished his goal in a very impressive way. If you haven't seen it, be sure to drop by for a visit. Currently he is working on an 18-foot map of Highway 111 extending from Bob Hope Drive through Indian Wells. He is using various items, photos, text, etc. to tell the story of our main artery. Next on his agenda is the important role of the Cahuilla Indian tribe in the history of the Coachella Valley, especially their contributions to the community as artists and musicians. This one will be fun to watch as it progresses.

Archie grew up in Los Angeles and attended U.C.L.A. He studied film-making, and he says he loved every minute of his work and was lucky enough to always be able to get a job in that field. In the early days of television, he began working for CBS as a draftsman. He drew every Playhouse 90, a landmark TV show of the early 1960s. After that he hired on at the major studios doing film and TV work. In the theatre, he did four major plays at the Mark Taper Forum. Later as a film and television art director, he worked all over the world with two projects in Europe, several in the Caribbean, Mexico and throughout the United States. Meanwhile, Archie had a career as a teacher at U.C.L.A., U.S.C., U.C-Irvine, and California Institute of the Arts.

When Mr. Sharp moved to the desert 15 years ago, he got involved with the La Quinta Historical Society. He more or less took over the entire building, designing and executing displays for the museum, working on exterior architectural elements and designing furniture. Another project in which he was involved was as designer and technical director for the "Nutcracker" ballet at the McCallum Theatre four years in a row. Archie says he is very grateful to the community for the opportunity to do what he does best -- creative work.



**NEW MEMBERS****Family:** Eric Vogt

Ivan & Barbara Price  
 Arthur & Eloise Helbling  
 Steve & Tracy Lech

Nick Steffanoff  
 Nancy Oswald  
 Don & Jackie Damron  
 Michael & Lori Sanford

**Individual:** Sid Burks  
 Nancy Smith  
 Deirdre Antia

\*\*\*\*\*

**MEMBERS WHO LIVE IN OUR MEMORIES**

**Helen Oliver** has a special place in the hearts of Society members. A couple of years ago Helen applied for the position of Office Manager with the recommendation of Bob Wilmeth, our loyal Board Treasurer. She was an accountant with an appreciation of local history. As the Society Curator, I recall the many times she put a valuable piece for the archives in my "in box." When we were searching for interesting displays to put up over the Christmas holidays, she volunteered her huge set of holiday village buildings and her international doll collection. Helen always looked good, which may have been a throwback to her beauty queen days. This is her story.

Helen Richi Mcneese was born in 1925, a direct descendent of Mary Queen of Scots. At age 15 she was crowned Strawberry Queen of Edgar County, Illinois. A high school cheerleader, she redesigned the uniform with a shorter skirt. With a girl friend, she moved to Chicago after graduation. It was in the windy city that she met Merlyn Oliver, a young Naval recruit, and they were married two weeks later. They had a son in Florida and a daughter in California. While her children were still quite young, she won the title of "Mrs. California."

Helen did the accounting for many businesses in the valley, including the Iron Gate Restaurant, Sunrise Corp., C.V. Pheasant Club, and Colt Security Service (owned by her children Dennis & Carol.) The Red Hat Society, a fun-loving social group, was one of her favorites.....just as she was one of our favorites. We miss her smiling face.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Loraine Lyon** moved to Palm Desert in 1989. She organized the Forest Home Women's Auxiliary, Inland Empire area Board with four chapters (it now has 8 chapters.) Her faith was strong and she was active in Southwest Community Church ministries. She and her husband, Whitney, have been Society members for a short time.

\*\*\*\*\*

**YARD SALE REPORT****Saturday & Sunday - October 29 & 30**

After all the pick-ups, packing, unpacking, pricing, repacking, displaying, and deliveries, I am happy to tell you that the main players in the yard sale project are still on their feet. What really pepped us up after an especially tiring week was to hear what we netted - \$7,000. In an attempt to list all the people who worked so hard, I would surely miss some; so I'll just say thank you from the bottom of our hearts. It takes a special kind person who is willing to roll up his/her sleeves and get dirty. We have another name for them too -- "Garage Sale Experts."

At Tuesday's Board of Directors meeting, we decided to start right away to collect for next year's fire house sale. You can bring items to the back yard or call for a pick-up. We would like appealing, saleable items, even antiques and boutique-type things, jewelry, etc. .... but no clothing, shoes, mattresses, or bed pillows .... please. Spread the word to your family and friends.

**VOLUNTEERS / DOCENTS**

A planning / information meeting is scheduled for Jan. 10 (see next page). This is a perfect time for new volunteers to come and get acquainted. A December 3 field trip is planned to the dedication of the remodeled Gilman Ranch. Because of the expanded time schedule for 2006, we need lots of new docents. Also we desperately need people who could help with mailings occasionally throughout the year....rides can be arranged. Another thing on our list is a wheelchair (light-weight preferred.) Thank you for your cooperation.

**EXTENDED SCHEDULE**

With the opening of the new Visitors Center at the end of El Paseo, we hope to attract more visitors. The Directors have decided to set up a trial period covering January, February, and March 2006. During this time the Society will be open to the public as follows:

Monday thru Saturday (6 days a week) -- 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:**

Jan. 8, Sun. - Golf Cart Parade 1 p.m., preceded by P.D.R.C. Pancake Breakfast  
Jan. 10, Tues. - Docent meeting 3 p.m. - at fire house, Jean Ernst 346-0041  
Mar. 26 Sun. - Ed Mullins Memorial Picnic  
April 19 Wed. (tentative) - Annual Spring Luncheon  
May 14 Sun. (tentative) - Founder's Day

**PALMS IN PALM DESERT -- A History**

Washingtonia Felefiria Palms (fan palms) grown from Palm Canyon seed in a nursery at Deep Canyon Ranch (located on both sides of Hwy. 111 in Palm Desert) were transplanted to permanent locations as follows:

The Living Desert Reserve

Shadow Mountain Club - 50 palms

Vintage Country Club

On east side of Deep Canyon Road for 1/2 mile.

North side of Palm Desert Community Church. - 18 palms

University of California - Riverside campus

Marrakesh Golf Club

Thunderbird Country Club

On residential property lots on:

Old Prospector Trail

Covered Wagon Trail

Mockingbird Trail

Setting Sun Trail

**HISTORY OF THE TATE FAMILY**

*Stolen from the July 1987 issue C.V.H.S. Scratches in the Sand*

*Are the Tates in your organization? There is old man Dic-tate who wants to run everything, while Uncle Ro-tate tries to change things. Their sister Agi-tate stirs up plenty of troubles with help from her husband Iri-tate. Whenever new projects are suggested, Hesi-tate and his wife Vege-tate want to wait until the new year. Then there is Aunt Imi-tate who wants our organization to be like all the others. Devas-tate provides the voice of doom, while Poten-tate wants to be the big shot. There is the black sheep of the family Ampu-tate who has completely cut himself off from the organization. But not all members are bad. Brother Facili-tate is quite helpful in organization matters, and a delightful, happy member of the family is Felici-tate. Cousins Cogi-tate and Medi-tate always think things over and then lend a helping hand.*

Happy Holidays !    Ginny Folkers, Editor

Historical Society of Palm Desert  
72-861 El Paseo  
P. O. Box 77  
Palm Desert, CA 92261